I Claim:

1. An apparatus that prevents tangling of a fishing line that passes through one or more guides on a fishing rod, comprising:

a housing having a first end, a second end spaced from the first end, and first and second opposing walls extending therebetween;

a clamp operative to secure the fishing rod to the housing;

a bore extending through the housing;

a slot in the first wall and in communication with the bore, the slot being sized to receive the fishing line; and

a gate rigidly disposed relative to the housing so as to impede free passage of the fishing line from the bore and into the slot.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the bore extends through to top and bottom surfaces of the housing and wherein the second wall extends from the first end to the second end such that the top and bottom surfaces are wide at locations proximate the first end and comparatively narrow at locations proximate the second end.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the second wall extends from the first end to the second end in a substantially straight line.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the clamp comprises a movable arm that urges the fishing rod against the first end of the housing.

5. The apparatus of claim 4, further comprising threading in the first end of the housing, and screws mounted in the movable arm, whereby rotation of the screws moves the arm linearly.

6. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a bushing between the clamp and the housing, the fishing rod being seatable in the bushing.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a liner disposed within the bore, the liner comprising a material having a hardness sufficient to resist cutting by the fishing line as the fishing line is advanced through the bore under tension.

8. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the slot extends through the liner.

9. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the gate overlies one of the top and bottom surfaces.

10. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the gate is disposed at an angle relative to the bore.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the gate is disposed substantially perpendicular to the bore.

12. The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising a passage defined between the housing and the gate, the passage being sized to receive and transfer the fishing line between the bore and the slot.

13. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the bore is vertically aligned with at least one of the guides, the gate overlies a first portion of the bore and is clear of a second portion of the bore, the gate preventing the line from becoming dislodged, and the bore introducing a kink in the fishing line as the fishing line passes through the bore.

14. A method of preventing tangles on a cast fishing line as the fishing line is reeled in, comprising the steps of:

(a) placing the fishing line under tension in a tensioner connected to a fishing rod at a point along the length of the fishing rod that is distal to yet proximate to a reel; and

(b) reeling in the fishing line onto the reel while maintaining tension distal to the reel.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the placing step comprises guiding the fishing line past a gate into the bore that is sized to receive and maintain the fishing line under tension.

16. The method of claim 14 including the additional step of releasing the fishing line from the tensioner after the fishing line has been reeled in so as to permit casting of the fishing line.